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MUSIC IN THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

By W. J. LAWRENCE

THE popular, labour-shirking tendency to view things in the mass, and, in historical inquiry, to seek only for elements of standardization, has for long prevented us from arriving at a true conception of the multiform characteristics of the Elizabethan Theatre. To start from a basis of postulated unification in dealing with an institution of heterogeneous complexity is to proceed on a journey whose milestones present nothing more material than a series of erroneous deductions. It is true that during the last decade Elizabethan inquiry has become more scientific. We have gained some ground in recognising that there were two well-differenced kinds of early theatres, contrasted not only in their architectural features but in the minutiae of their entertainment, which were known in their own day as "public" and "private." But we have not been courageous enough to rebel against the tyranny of these old dichotomies, which tend to prolong confusion of thought by conveying to the modern mind meanings alien to what they possessed. Since the private theatres were equally public with the public theatres, the only essential difference in this connexion being the charging of higher rates of admission at the one to insure a certain exclusiveness, it would make for clarity if we could bring ourselves to distinguish them simply as the common and the select.

There were, of course, other broad divergences between the two kinds of theatres, and one of these, at least, is germane to our subject. To begin with, the select playhouse was smaller than the common, open-air playhouse, and differed from it in being roofed and cosy, and in giving performances on an artificially-lit stage. But if we contrast the two types within a strictly limited period, that is between 1577 and 1603, we shall find a still more remarkable differentiation in the nature of the performances and in the matter of histrionic presentation. Indeed, but that the antithesis does not permit of extended application, one might fittingly substitute for the terms *public* and *private* the more significant distinctions of *professional* and *amateur*. For, whereas within the period specified, that stirring epoch during which theatrical routine was being steadily organized, the

players in the common theatres were mostly men, performances in the select houses were entirely given by choir-boys. Unable to compete with the adults on the plane of human passion, the boys were yet no mean representatives of the oddities of human character, allied to which they made secondary appeal to the emotions by the beauty of their song and the charm of their music. Thus it was that because of their gifts as well as their limitations their typical dramatist, John Lyly was the *fons et origo* of two phases of drama, the artificial comedy, which reached its zenith with Congreve and died with Wilde, and the musical comedy, which, though steadily degenerating since his day, still preserves vitality.

Of the dependence placed by the choir-boys on the attractions of music and song and the allied art of the dance, once the scheme of the select theatre had matured, there can be no question. Besides a liberal interspersment of graceful lyrics in the dramatic action, the act-intervals were always marked by a competent rendering of carefully selected instrumental music. Naymore, at their maturest period and perhaps earlier, the boys' performances were distinguished by one much appreciated feature, a sort of composite overture of music and song which the common players never imitated. We owe this fact to the Diary of Philip Julius, Duke of Stettin-Pomerania, as kept during his visit to London in 1602 by his tutor and secretary, Frederic Gerschow. After a visit with the Duke to the select theatre in the Blackfriars, Gerschow wrote in substance:

For a whole hour preceding the play one listens to a delightful musical entertainment on organs, lutes, pandorins, mandolins, violins and flutes, as on the present occasion, indeed, when a boy *cum voce tremulo* sang so charmingly to the accompaniment of a bass-viol that unless possibly the nuns at Milan may have excelled him, we had not heard his equal on our journey.

The difficulty in determining how far and at what periods select-theatre procedure affected common-theatre routine—not to speak of the exact parallelisms existing between them—has given rise to a vigorous controversy over the significance of a curious passage in an old play. To interpret this aright would add a vital fact to stage history. Before reproducing the passage one must explain that in 1604 the King's men somehow got possession of Marston's comedy of *The Malcontent*, as originally produced by the Blackfriars children only a few months previously, and, after having additions made to it by Webster (and its author?), brought it out at the Globe. One of these new

features was an induction in which William Sly asks the players how they came by the piece about to be acted and is told by Condell that they had found it. "What are your additions?" continues Sly; and Burbage replies, "Sooth, not greatly needful; only as your salad to your great feast, to entertain a little more time, *and to abridge the not-received custom of music in our theatre.*"

It is around the puzzling passage here italicised that controversy has raged; and although it is against all precedent for the advocate to sit as judge, I may perhaps be permitted as an early protagonist in the fight to attempt a summing up with the view of precipitating a satisfactory verdict. Stating them in the chronological order of their propoundment, the various interpretations of the passage have been as follows:

(1) That the common theatres had not as yet adopted the system of preliminary and inter-act music in vogue at the select houses. (Prof. C. W. Wallace, 1908).

(2) That the passage implied the omission at the Globe of certain internal musical features of the original play. (W. J. Lawrence, 1912).

(3) That "the not-received custom" was purely that of the musical prelude. (Prof. T. S. Graves, 1915).

As (1) comprises (3), one may fittingly discuss the two together, taking Prof. Graves's theory first, seeing that unlike his brother-scholar with whom he goes part of the way, he advances some argument in support of his belief. This is what he says:

Stoll, without using Burbage's evidence above, has already shown beyond all reasonable doubt that Webster's 'additions', which were composed for the King's servants, are confined to the induction. This is exactly what Burbage himself tells us: Somebody (i.e. Webster) wrote additions (the induction) for the Globe version of the play stolen in retaliation from the Blackfriars company, additions which were to occupy part, but not all ('abridge'), of the hour formerly devoted to the musical prelude. That Burbage is thinking only of the induction as a substitute for the preliminary music, and not of musical interpersions or additions to the play proper, is clear when we understand the significance of his expression 'only as salad to your great feast.' This is his way of saying that the 'additions' preceded the play proper; for in his time the French custom, as distinguished from the Spanish, of eating 'sallets' before the most substantial part of 'a great feast' predominated in England.

Plausible as all this sounds, Mr. Graves has not reviewed the whole of the evidence. There were other additions to *The Malcontent* besides the induction of Webster. In 1604, the year in which the play was appropriated by the King's men, two versions of it were published by William Aspley. One would appear

to represent the play as given originally by the children; the other states on the imprint, "augmented by Marston. With the additions played by the King's Maiesties servants. Written by Iohn Webster." Each version has passages peculiar to itself, showing that certain deletions were made from the original and other passages substituted. Assuming (doubtless incorrectly)¹ that these alterations were the work of Webster, Dyce includes *The Malcontent* in his edition of Webster's works, but is careful enough to place in inverted commas all the passages peculiar to the Webster or 'induction' version of the play. These are numerous and widely interspersed; sometimes, as in the first act, we find as many as 45 lines inserted at a time. Added to this a fresh character appears in the cast.

To my mind these details admit only of one conclusion, viz.: that the additional passages were substitutions for time-devouring features in the original which either could not be adequately reproduced by the Globe players or they did not deem it politic to put before their public, lest it should clamour for them regularly. The latter is the more feasible supposition. The only select-theatre characteristic of this order was the lavish interspersment of song and dance, allied with the tendency (illustrated in *The Malcontent*) to introduce masques. That there was a grave difference in musical routine between the two kinds of theatres, irrespective of the question of preludes and inter-act selections, Marston himself has testified. In a note appended to his tragedy, *The Wonder of Women*, he writes:

After all, let me intreat my reader not to taxe me for the fashion of the entrances and musique of this tragedy, for know it is printed only as it was presented by youths, and after the fashion of the private stage.

It must not be taken from this that the common players were incapable of regaling their following with song and dance or set their faces against indulging them with these delights. Apart from the question of quality, the only real difference was that they eschewed select-theatre routine and kept practically all of their musical allurements for the jig or afterpiece. In nowise inspired by the rivalry of the choir-boys, the jig had sprung into

¹But see, R. A. Small, *The Stage Quarrel between Ben Jonson and the so-called Poetasters* (1899), p. 115. Small repunctuates the title-page, and arrives at the conclusion that Webster alone was responsible for the additions. He points out that they greatly impede the action, a circumstance which goes to show that they were not inspired by any desire to improve the play. Small's idea is that Webster, at the instance of the King's Men, "fitted the play for the public stage by omitting the songs and replacing them by an induction and new scenes": a conclusion at which I afterwards arrived independently.

vogue in the days of Tarleton's meridian, somewhere in the fifteen-eighties. The prototype of ballad opera, it was a lewd musical farce of short duration, written wholly in rhyme for four or five characters and sung and danced to a variety of popular tunes. The sustained popularity of the jig militated against any material emulation of the select-theatre principle of lavish musical interpersement. Time was limited in an open-air playhouse giving performances in the afternoon by natural light. Any serious additions to the routine would have frequently involved resort towards the close to torches and candles, an item of extra expense that the players, who shared the profits, avoided.

This much, however, must be said for Professor Graves's theory, that negative evidence favours it. We have no inkling throughout the reign of Elizabeth or for sometime after that the common players indulged their public with any musical prelude. It is not until 1632 that we find Quarles in his *Divine Fancies* expatiating upon the "all the world's a stage" theme and writing:

Our life's a tragedy; those secret roomes
Wherein we tyre us, are our mothers' wombes:
The musicke ush'ring in the play is mirth
To see a manchild brought upon the earth.

There was much less distinction between the two kinds of theatres in 1632 than in 1604, for children-companies (no longer composed of choir-boys) were waning in popularity, and the common players had confused the issue by invading the select theatres. Although fanciful allusion cannot always be taken as scientific evidence, and there is nothing to indicate what kind of theatre Quarles had in mind in working out his wire-drawn similitude, still the trend of events show that by this period there was standardization of theatrical routine. Hence the day of the universally adopted overture, or rather of the first, second and third music preceding the play at intervals, may have arrived.

But there is one insuperable objection to Professor Graves's theory. He overlooks the fact that whereas it was impossible to remove a number of special, undesirable features from an early select-theatre play of average length so as to fit it for common-theatre performance without making equivalent substitutions, it was quite possible in 1604 to omit all the preliminary music without diminishing the quantum of entertainment usually given to the common-theatre public. There was no need to supply an induction or anything else to fill the gap, as the gap for the common-theatre audience did not exist.

We are thrown back on the conclusion that the induction, which was undoubtedly "the sallet to the great feast," was, with the other additions, provided for some more essential purpose. The final question is, does the necessity for their provision prove, in accordance with Professor Wallace's deduction (1), a rule of continuous performance, or at least the non-employment of inter-act music in the early common playhouse? We have an abundance of evidence testifying to the normality of musical intermissions in the select theatres. Assuming continuous performance in the common houses, it is easy to see that the transference of, say, a Blackfriars play of 1600 or thereabouts to the Globe would lead to a material shortening of the time of representation. It might be argued that the Globe version of *The Malcontent* presents evidence negating this assumption, as at the beginning of Act II we have the direction, "Enter Mendoza with a sconce, to observe Ferneze's entrance; who whilst the act [music] is playing, enters unbraced, etc." But it is quite possible that here one of the original stage directions has accidentally been included, and that it does not really signify the manner in which the act opened or was preluded at the Globe. To determine the point we shall have to look for corroborative evidence, and to approach the crux less directly. The question really involves a broad consideration of the employment of music in the early common theatre.

The theory of continuous performance has been for long sturdily advocated by a school of German scholars which has striven to deduce from it certain hypothetical laws of Elizabethan dramaturgy. In a sense it has been logically evolved. We know that at the common theatres performances began at three o'clock and generally lasted about three hours. As natural light was employed and there was little inclination on the part of the players to go to the expense of torches and candles at the fag-end of a play, there would be a natural tendency to eliminate from the scheme of representation everything that made for delay. Hence, it is assured that, whatever the summer routine, in the winter act-intervals would either be eliminated or cut down to the narrowmost limits. So far we are on safe ground, but when advocates of the continuous theory draw our attention to the absence of act-divisions in many of the old play-quartos and attempt to use the fact as evidence, a protest must be entered. Since select-theatre plays like *The Phoenix* are to be found printed in this way the point has no bearing. It is idle to argue that the early dramatists did not write or think in acts.

However indicated, the act-divisions were made. In Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Arragon*, (1599), Venus as chorus or presenter makes reference in Acts II and III to what was going to be shewn "in this act," showing that an act was then a well-defined section. Similar evidence could be cited from later common-theatre plays, but it would only tend to confuse the issue by pressing into service the testimony of plays produced or printed later than Elizabeth's reign.

Confining ourselves, therefore, strictly to the period of 1577-1603, it must be admitted that there is very little proof of music between the acts in the early common theatres and nothing to show the observance of any regular principle. In Dulwich College are preserved sundry old "platts" of plays formerly belonging to the Rose Theatre and made to be hung up in the tiring house for the better guidance of the actors and stage-hands during the performance. Written by hand, they consist for the most part of entrance-sequences. On the question of act-intervals their evidence is contradictory. In the platt of *The Dead Man's Fortune*, a Rose play of *ca* 1593, the act-divisions are indicated by rows of crosses and marginal music-cues, showing that at this period musical intermissions were not altogether unknown. But none of the other platts have a like indication, some marking the breaks without presenting music-cues and others showing no breaks at all. Clearly no sort of principle can be deduced from these divergences. The only corroboration of the platt of *The Dead Man's Fortune*, within our period, is that afforded by Yarrington's *Two Tragedies in One* (which we can safely assume to have been a common-theatre play), where, at the end of Act III, the subsequent act-music is naïvely referred to in the text.

In striving to reconcile the contradictoriness of the platts would one be safe in assuming that in the common playhouses there was a summer method and a winter method, the first being marked by regular musical intermissions and the second by continuous or semi-continuous performance? It is curious to note that both in early select-theatre plays and in plays written for performance at the inns of court the principle of semi-continuity was followed (or perhaps established), showing that its uprise was more a matter of technic and convention than of circumstantial necessity. In that old Gray's Inn play of 1566, Gascoyne's *The Supposes*, the performance was continuous up to the end of the third act, after which the divisions were observed. So too, in Lyly's *Sapho and Phao*, as played by the Blackfriars boys in or about 1581, there is evidence that the third and

fourth acts were taken all in a breath, so to speak, and it may be that from the beginning of the third act the performance went on to the end without intermission. Even Shakespeare in his early period bowed to this method of construction. In *Titus Andronicus*, a common-theatre play of 1592, no interruption of the action occurs between the first and the second acts. Later examples might be cited.

Here we have evidence in three different kinds of plays of occasional resort to the principle of semi-continuity, a principle (as in the case of *Histrionastix* in 1598 with its unexampled six acts) which was possibly utilised in most cases where the play was of undue length. Its existence argues against the frequency of continuous performance in any kind of theatre, seeing that the greater includes the less. So widespread, however, is the belief in uninterrupted representation, that some investigators, forgetting that the old theatre musician had other duties besides playing in the intervals, have gone the length of saying that the earliest common playhouses, the Theater and the Curtain, made no use of music. On the absurdity of this attitude it is needless to expatiate. The royal patent of May, 1574, to James Burbage and others under which the Theater was established authorises them

to use, exercise, and occupie the art and faculty of playeing Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes, Stage playes and also to use and occupye all such Instrumtents as they have already practised, or hereafter shall practise, for & during our plesure.

There can be no doubt as to what is here meant by "instrumtents," as the ensuing clause authorising them to play in London or elsewhere, speaks of "the said Comedies, Tragedies, Enterludes and Stage playes, together with their musick."

It would be idle to maintain that the only instruments employed by Burbage and his fellows were the drum and trumpet of the chronicle plays. Dumb shews formed a distinguishing characteristic of the Elizabethan Drama from its infancy, and it cannot be lost sight of that these brief pantomimic interludes were invariably accompanied by music. (Shakespeare refers to this combination when he makes Hamlet say the groundlings are capable of nothing but "inexplicable dumb shew and noise," for, offensive as is the collocation to us, *noise* was a common Elizabethan expression for music). Moreover, in less than a decade from the establishment of the Theater and the Curtain there had originated that delight of the populace, the Jig; and for it

also, more even than for the dumb shew, musicians were requisite. In this connexion they were not necessarily of high accomplishment, as in the days before the Restoration stringed instrument parts were always in unison with the voice and had no independent function save on rare occasions when a few measures of curt symphony were given. But there is surely no need to labour the point. Proof that music was employed in the old Shoreditch playhouses from the outset is afforded us in Gosson's *School of Abuse*, (1579), where, in speaking of their conductors, he says:

There set they abroche straunge consortes of melody to tickle the eare; costly apparel, to flatter the sight; effeminate gesture, to ravish the sence; and wanton speache, to whet desire to inordinate lust.

Hitherto nobody has pointed out that the early common theatres had easy means of obtaining a band of musicians ready-made. The institution of the Waits was then at its fullest development, and there were numerous bodies of these trained musicians in and about London.¹ Not only had each ward of the city a company of Waits, but there were also the Waits of Finsbury, of Blackfriars, and of Southwark, not to speak of the Corporation Waits which attended on the Lord Mayor on festive occasions. There is some evidence to show that the Waits were employed for long in the common theatres. In that mysterious play *Sir Thomas More*, which may be dated *ca.* 1596, there is a scene in the fourth act in More's house in Chelsea, wherein an interlude is amusingly performed before a number of guests. Just as the characters enter to see this a direction says "the waytes playe." Again in Heywood's *If you know not me, you know nobody*, Part II, published in 1605, following on a juncture where the musicians had been exercising their art, we have the direction, "Enter Sir Thomas Ramsie, the 2 Lords, My Lady Ramsie, the Waits in Sergeants' gowns, with an interpreter." In those days when crowds had to come on, it was customary on occasion, owing to the shortage of stage-hands, to press the musicians into service as supernumeraries. An even more significant direction is to be found in the fifth act of Hemings' tragedy *The Fatal Contract* (*ca.* 1635). This reads "Enter the Eunuch, whilst the waits play softly." In connection with the two other plays, where the scene is laid in England, it might be argued that the term "waits" was a mere figure of speech and did not refer to any

¹See Mr. F. A. Hadland's interesting article on the subject in *The Monthly Musical Record* for April, 1916.

company of waits playing in the theatre. But this would not hold good in the case of *The Fatal Contract*, where the term could not be thus applied, as the action took place in France. Taken collectively, therefore, the three items of evidence warrant the assumption that various bodies of Waits were employed in the common theatres. It is noteworthy that all the directions just cited occur in common-theatre plays.

The Southwark Waits were noted for the excellence of their music, and as the Globe wherein Shakespeare played was the leading theatre of that district, it seems not unlikely that the Southwark Waits were associated for long with that house. One recalls in this connexion that the instruments known as Wayts derived their name from the musicians who played on them, and that they were in reality a species of hautboy of varying pitches. Although it would be an unwarranted assumption to infer that the sixteenth and seventeenth century Waits played no other sort of instrument, it is possible that here we have a clue to the frequency with which hautboys were employed, in processions and other ways, in the common playhouse. Obviously a high-class band, such as the Lord Mayor's, would be conversant with other instruments. An organisation of this order would probably consist of six instruments, two viols (one treble and one bass), one flute, a cithern (i.e. an "English guitar," strung with wire), a treble lute, and a pandora. This was the combination for which Morley wrote his *Consort Lessons* in 1599, and it suggests the instruments which would have been employed in the intermissions, could we feel assured of their occurrence and of some agreeably filling-up of the gaps in the common playhouse.

Confining ourselves no longer to the period of 1575-1603, but reviewing the Pre-restoration era as a whole, we are forced to the conclusion that act-intervals existed in both kinds of theatres, but that in the common houses they were distinguished by their brevity. We must recall that in those days there was no friendly front curtain to inspire picture-poster endings, and that consequently dramatists thought nothing of breaking off an act in the middle of an interesting situation. As in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, characters could be shewn going to sleep on the stage at the end of one act and waking up in the act following. We have only to turn to *King Lear* and *Catiline* to see that a thunderstorm once started on its way continued rumbling, despite the temporary check of an act-intermission. Examples of this order are much more frequent in common-theatre plays than in plays produced by children-companies. But because

of this general tendency to leave ragged ends at the close of an act, to break off abruptly in the middle, the skilled select-theatre dramatist often attempted to justify the intrusion of inter-act music by allying it in some way with the action. This led to an artistic relevancy altogether lacking in later times, as in the eighteenth century, when a writer complained that at the end of every act, the audience,

carried away by a jig of Vivaldi's, or a concerto of Giardini's, lose every warm impression relative to the piece, and begin again cool and unconcerned as at the commencement of the representation.

Many curious examples could be cited from select-theatre plays showing this textual leading up to the inter-act music with the view of giving it an intrinsic, rather than external *raison d'être*. Marston has a quaint method of giving the musicians their cues in rhyming tags at the end of his acts. Thus in *What you will*, at the close of Act II, Quadratus says:

. . . That's all my prayers exact;
So ends our chat; sound music for the act.

Again in *Antonio and Mellida*, Pt. II, Act I, sc. 2, towards the end (at ll. 302-3) Pandulpho asks for soft music, which is played. At the close of the act (l. 340) he says:

Sound louder music: let my breath exact
You strike sad tones until this dismal act.

The direction, "loud music, exeunt" follows, showing that here, as in many other instances, the inter-act music began before the act had wholly concluded. Nor must it be thought that this trick of associating the inter-act music with the foregoing action was peculiar to Marston. Others had it. In Chapman's Blackfriars comedy of *May-Day*, at the close of the third act, Quintiliano requests the Tapster of the inn to call in some music, and the man replies that he will do so. Music was then heard—but it was the music of the intermission. More than a score of years later we find Brome adopting the same device at the same theatre. There is a scene at the end of the second act of *The Novella* (1632), where Victoria, after having placed her expectant admirers in adjoining rooms, says that since they cannot feast their eyes upon her, "let Musick feast their eares." This is simply the cue for the inter-act music.

Not all music in the select theatres was thus wedded to the action, but the dramatists were always hungering to complete the union, and when they found they could not conveniently do

it at the one end they strove to do it at the other. Thus the inter-act music had often some of the characteristics of a modern operatic overture. One finds in *Dick of Devonshire* a direction prefacing the second act which reads:

Alarum; as the soft musicke begins a peelee of ordnance goes off; then Cornetts sound a battaile; which ended enter Captaine, master of a ship; Dick Pike, with musketts.

Often the action of the play is resumed before the music has ceased playing. In Marston's *Sophonisba* we read, preceding the second act,

Whilst the musicke for the first act sounds, Hanno, Carthalo, Bythias, Gelloso enter; they place themselves as to counsell; Gisco the imposer, waiting on them; Hanno, Carthalo, and Bythias setting their hands to a writing, which being offered to Gelloso, he denies his hand and as much offended impatiently starts up and speakes.

Much more ingenious is the manner in which Ben Jonson in *The Staple of News* (1625) binds the music after the third act to the ensuing action; and the illustration shows how carefully on occasion the music had to be chosen. The fourth act opens in the Devil Tavern, where Madrigal the poet is seen amidst his associates silently writing a song to the air just played in the interval. This he reads out when finished, at the request of the company; and, after a line has been amended, Nicholas the singing boy, and the fiddlers are called in, and the song at once rendered.

Long before the French had invented the principle of the *melodrame*, thus paving the way for Wagner's *leit-motiv*, the Elizabethan players had demonstrated the potency of incidental music as an intensifier of the emotional possibilities of a touching situation. In that Shakespearean precursor, *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*, there is a highly pathetic scene in a bedroom in the Tower where the two little Princes, on the verge of their murder, kneel down in silent prayer, and so remain for a time while solemn music is heard. The effect, of course, was purely melodramatic, as the music had no appropriateness as a synchronising happening; but as it occurs in a common-theatre play of 1590, or thereabouts, it serves to show the amount of attention then being paid by the common players to incidental musical detail. At a slightly later period, sometimes a whole scene and sometimes (as in *Old Fortunatus*, Act III) two or three scenes in succession would have a running musical accompaniment. Possibly because of his keen stage experience, no dramatist of his time knew better how to employ incidental music than Shakespeare.

Recall, for example, the scene in *Twelfth Night*, where the Duke, after sneering at the "light airs and recollected terms" of those "most brisk and giddy-paced times," desires to hear again "the old and antique song" formerly so easeful to his passion. Unseen, the musicians in their gallery begin to play the air, and its sweet, sad strains intermingle deliciously with the several harmonised speeches that follow. When the atmosphere becomes literally steeped in the music, then Feste comes on and sings the song.

There has been some dispute among antiquaries as to the nature of the "still-music," which we find so frequently occurring in old plays, mostly in pathetic situations. Galpin, whom one always listens to respectfully even when one finds occasion to object, thinks that still-music was provided by Krumphorns or Cromornes, a sort of shawm turned up at the lower end like a crook, of which he gives an illustration. But the evidence of the old plays is against this supposition. Since there were still-minstrels in the employment of the court as early as the days of Henry VII, it is not surprising to find still-music being utilised on the stage at an early period, considerably before the establishment of the first playhouse.

Some of the references, however, to still-music in the old plays are highly confusing. In Gascoigne's *Jocasta*, as performed at Gray's Inn in 1566, we find mention of "still-pipes." A quarter of a century later we have the direction in Marston's *Second Part of Antonio and Mellida*, Act IV, sc. 3, "the still-flutes sound softly." It is not, indeed, until 1630 that we get any definite clue as to the precise nature of still-music. (Since the above was written I find in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, V. i., the direction "Still musicke of Records." Though not printed till 1634, this play was produced in 1613. So far back as 1598, Guilpin, in writing in his *Skialetheia*, (No. 29) of Arion, a musical fanatic, says:

Heele a tell you of well fretting of a Lute
Even til you fret, and of the harmonie,
Is either in a still cornet or flute.

This is the first and last time we hear of a "still cornet." Musical antiquaries will not need to be told that the Elizabethan cornet belonged to the category of wood-wind.)

In Davenant's Blackfriars tragedy, *The Cruel Brother*, the death of Corsa in the fifth act is marked by the prompter's foregoing marginal note "Recorders: sadly" and by the textual direction "Still-music above." Foreste speaks of the strains as of celestial origin, and then we have another marginal note "cease,

Recorders." Relative to the textual direction, it must be recalled that the normal position of the musicians was then in an elevated curtained box in the centre of the tiring house. The source of the music was therefore unseen, a circumstance which considerably heightened the effect. Finally, the equation of still-music with recorders settles a much disputed point.

Marston, therefore, was justified in speaking of "still-flutes," as the recorder was a variety of flute-à-bec with a compass of two octaves from middle F upwards. Its employment on the stage, so far from ending with the Civil War, extended to the close of the century. The "wind music" which so highly delighted good Master Pepys in the performance of *The Virgin Martyr* was undoubtedly still-music, though the term had ceased to be used. The worthy diarist was enraptured with the recorder, and, in 1668, went so far as to purchase one with the view of learning how to play it. A little later the recorder took on a new spell of life and assumed a different function under its new French alias. In 1679, Evelyn records that "the Flute Douce is now much in request for accompanying the voice."